

# NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

SUITE 601 • 1717 K STREET, N.W. • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036 • TELEPHONE (202) 382-6595

FREDERICK H. BURKHARDT  
Chairman

CHARLES H. STEVENS  
Executive Director

## SPECIAL MEETING

October 27, 1972

### Summary of Proceedings

There were present:

Members of the Commission: Messrs. Aines, Becker, Burkhardt, Cuadra, Dunlap, Lerner, Lorenz, Moore, Scott, and Velde

Members of the Staff : Messrs. Stevens, Swartz and Mmes. Dixon and Reszetar

The meeting began at 8:45 a.m. in the Wilson Room of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Mr. Stevens announced the following persons who would not testify as scheduled: Ms. Stella Keenan, Executive Director, National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services; Mrs. Dorothy Gilford and Mr. Frank Schick of the U.S. Office of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics; Mr. Sol Schildhause, Chief of CATV, Federal Communications Commission; and Mr. Paul Zurkowski, Executive Director, Information Industry Association. These four groups will be invited to appear before the Commission in January.

The following presentations were made:

#### Council of National Library Associations, Inc.

Mr. Robert W. Gibson, Jr., Chairman, stressed the need for "network concept." "We feel that more attention should be placed on the library network for all users. As a taxpayer, it bothers me that we are spending so much money in duplication of libraries. We hope the Commission can be instrumental in expanding the support of major reference libraries and creating the availability of rapid access," he said.

Mr. Gibson answered questions on shared collections and services. He stated, "Networking needs more support than these groups are able to put into it. That is what I am bothered about. I need to be able to sit in a console and ask you a question in Chicago and get the answer back. I need some way to get my hands on information in a relatively short time. We do not have that now. I want the complete answer and not just the reference."

## Public Library Association

Mrs. Allie Beth Martin made reference to the recent publication, "A Strategy for Public Change: Proposed Public Library Goals-Feasibility Study, American Library Association." She stated that many individual libraries are using this report as a basis for staff development. Mrs. Martin further stated, "Revenue sharing is uppermost in the minds of librarians. We need to know more than we do in order to be accountable and persuasive and to obtain our share of revenue sharing at the local level."

Burkhardt: Could you give us some detail on the four task forces?

Martin : More research is needed in the field of public library service. We need to know more about users and research in this field. There needs to be stimulated a coordinated effort in this direction. The next step is development, or application of it. Then, we have continuing education. It is in this area that I see the most happening voluntarily. The task forces are assigned the identification and activity in the field of research and of continuing education. There is no coordination of this effort. It is all voluntary. There is an awareness that a part of any coordination is a shared effort with the network concept which we support as being a critical need at the national level.

PLA continues to stress funding for all types of libraries. This pressure has not been minimized or reduced because of revenue sharing. One-third of the money coming into the state will not be earmarked in any way. The libraries could strive for this money.

Most public libraries will be involved with CATV.

We are doing everything we can to have people on our staff in the field of video technology.

## EDUCOM

Mr. Henry Chauncey, President, presented his testimony to the Commission. Mr. Chauncey stated that of particular interest was the National Science Computer Network. In describing this program, he stated, "At the EDUCOM Spring Conference on April 13, 1972, the NSF announced an expanded research program relative to a National Science Computer Network. As an initial step in this program, EDUCOM has received a grant to conduct a series of three General Working Seminars on the network. These seminars are designed to: acquaint interested educators with the trial National Science Network; encourage the development and submission of proposals for the use of the Network; and identify the problems and issues which will arise in connection with the development of the Network. They are preliminary to the establishment of an ongoing Institute which will conduct workshops, seminars and

training sessions aimed at determining and helping to solve the problems involved in the organization and establishment of a National Computer Network linking institutions of higher education. EDUCOM has a proposal for establishing this Institute before the NSF at the present time.

### NELINET

Mr. Ron Miller, Director, New England Board of Higher Education, presented his testimony to the Commission. He stressed his concern for cuts in New England by the LSCA, Titles I and III. Revenue sharing is also of primary concern in New England. Mr. Miller highlighted interest in telecommunications, lack of availability in talented people and their training in management of networks. "Library schools," he stated, "are not moving fast enough to provide manpower." He also stressed his interest in a New England hearing by NCLIS as soon as possible.

### Independent Research Libraries

Mr. Marcus A. McCorison, Chairman, Independent Research Libraries Association, presented IRL's main issue: If independent research libraries are valuable and even central to the future of the humanities in the United States, as the members of IRLA believe, their various problems cannot be ignored and their needs must be met. The stewards of these institutions of learning are committed not only to the survival of them but to enlarging the role of independent research libraries as the means of enriching our cultural life. The IRLA invites the National Commission to join in this effort.

IRLA requests the support of the Commission in obtaining recognition, in fact and under law, that independent, research libraries are essential parts of the nation's educational and library resources and as such should be equally eligible for Federal and state assistance with the other members of that structure.

"I do plea that the IRLA not be ignored in general planning for national library services and also plea that their role be accepted as having a particular one and that an effort to make the Massachusetts Historical Society relevant to grant school children is not necessarily appropriate. We ask your moral support that institutions of this sort be included in the realm of higher education in governmental legislation. We have trouble with the tax service because most of us operate mostly from endowment. The income which we have at hand is not generally derived from the cross section of public. Therefore, the members of IRLA request the help of the Commission in seeing that bona fide libraries are exempted by law, not by decree, from Federal taxation. What income we have we are afraid will start being taxed," he said.

## The U.S. Book Exchange

Mrs. Alice Ball, Executive Director, the United States Book Exchange, outlined USBE's major concern: The establishment of a national plan for the development of academic libraries. The result of this national plan would be helpful in averting the disparities in Federal aid which have added to the confusion of the last few years and at the same time give librarians an authoritative set of standards which they could put to good use in dealing with their own administration.

The second most important general need is the necessity for the development of a policy for international library relationships.

The third priority is a national plan for more effective use of the resources represented by USBE.

Mrs. Ball further stated, "The national serials program ought to be served by what USBE can provide and USBE should serve as an umbrella for this program."

## Federal Library Committee

Messrs. Kurt Cylke, Executive Secretary, Federal Library Committee, and John Sherrod, Director, National Agricultural Library, spoke to the Commission. The Federal libraries constitute one of the nation's most valuable resources. Today these assets are seriously underutilized frequently wasted, given second-class status, poorly supported, and ignored too often in broad organizational planning. The National Commission has an opportunity to guide the Congress and the Government to a new level of thinking about Federal libraries and to assure that this first-rate national resource is exploited fully for the benefit of the total citizenry.

Over the years Federal libraries, like other libraries, have had many common problems. Budgets and staffs have seldom been adequate to assure the quantity and level of services clients had a right to expect. Organizationally, Federal libraries have usually been relatively low in the hierarchy, frequently sharing the status of the building management services, the supply office, the mail and files unit.

Libraries in the Federal environment do not attract high level people into the profession. Sixty percent of the Federal librarians do not hold a degree. The problem is one of attracting good personnel. Death and retirement are the two things working in our favor.

Libraries within the same departments do not have any coordination whatsoever. We are working towards a central service concept to be implemented.

The "Federal Library Service Center" is looking at shared cataloging. There are no constraints at this point on this.

The FLC has assumed the position of leadership in several areas. One is the area of training with the seminar course approach in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission.

There is a valuable source at the University of Indiana which can be used not only by this Commission but other organizations and institutions. Mr. Fry is about to run out of money. The Commission could address itself to the expansion, promotion, and continuation of this project. "I urge you to give strong consideration to that project at Indiana," Mr. Cylke stated.

#### National Book Committee, Inc.

Mr. John C. Frantz, Executive Chairman, expressed his desire to have the National Commission take particular note of the right-to-read efforts of both the U.S. Office of Education and of the National Reading Center. Mr. Frantz presented four areas of responsibility of the National Commission as related to the goals and programs of the National Book Committee:

- (1) The special library needs of rural areas and of economically, socially, or culturally deprived persons.
- (2) Appraise the adequacies and deficiencies of current library and information resources and services.
- (3) Evaluate the effectiveness of current library and information science programs.
- (4) Extend and improve the nation's library and information-handling capability as essential links in the national communications networks.

Mr. Frantz stated other points:

--"A book" is any medium of communication that transmits facts, ideas, instructions, etc., from one place or person to another.

--There are geographical locations which do not have ready access to books. If people can't get them, they don't use them. We need to know more about making access to materials more readily available for all persons.

--The present method of distribution is not doing what I have in mind. There is a very short life on the shelf. The book goes back in 90 days if it is not sold.

--Two suggested areas of concern to the National Commission: (1) The increasing need to inject the skills of the librarian and the materials of the library into a variety of noninstitutional settings including of course, the home; and (2) the opportunity to fund library/librarian functions from sources which are essentially nonlibrary and even non-educational. What I have in mind here is that I think whether or not an inquirer gets answers from the resources of the various libraries is too much now a matter of luck. I am suggesting that the Commission concern itself with making sure whatever the point of origin of a request for materials that it goes to the point where the guy gets what he wants. I am convinced that it does not now happen. In spite of our cooperative library systems, it is a relatively small proportion of the requests that do not get short-circuited.

--I have no quarrel with the words, "public library." The image of the public librarian is a horse of a different color. The librarians who operate in the New York City Public Libraries are held almost in contempt by those who really make the important political and budget decisions in the city. In the Black or Spanish-speaking ghetto, the library is ignored.

#### National Technical Information Service

Mr. William T. Knox, Director, presented his testimony to the Commission. He stated that the information society is predominant; agricultural is down; manufacturing is down; and information, services, and education is up. In summarizing NTIS's activity, Mr. Knox stated that every title in the collection is requested three times per year or every stock item is requested 25 times per year. He further stated, "There has been increasing interest in the potential for NTIS as a Congressionally chartered, self-supporting corporation serving as the primary mechanism for enhancing U.S. technological capabilities and the competitive advantages of U.S. businessmen. This new INFOCORP would be the creative intermediary between Federal and foreign generators of information and the U.S. users of that information."

Mr. Knox made a slide presentation to the Commission:

Slide 1 - People and organizations were more dependent than ever on recorded and distributed information. Federal Government's role in information produced and distributed has greatly expanded without systematic planning. Technologies for handling information have developed fastest in variety and effectiveness.

Lorenz: How many persons are there in the work force of information?

Knox : Sixty percent of 80 million in the work force know they have a problem. Abstract concept of information is unknown and this is our problem.

Slide 2 - Technologies being exploited and without assessment or guidance as to optimal use. Libraries and librarians are typically out of it, concerned mainly about more books, stacks, money, etc. New types of organizations dominate in supplying information services. This is for adult services--not children.

The Library of Congress answers 5,000 questions per day;  
NTIS sells 15,000 documents per day.

Slide 3 - Libraries dilemma--Library staff views library function as "public welfare" under their professional ministration. People view the library's function as supplying of goods (i.e., books and other records).

#### Possible Solutions for Libraries:

Slide 4 - Turn over the supplying of goods to business organizations and restructuring the library function to professional analysis of client's needs and prescription of remedial goods, or

Recognize that libraries today are "in business" and restructure relations with users to accord with business procedures.

Cuadra: What do you mean about restructure the relations with users?

Knox : If we say--as a matter of public policy--that the library profession is the one to do it, we provide a professional diagnosis of information needs.

Burkhardt: Are you taking any position as to whether the libraries and librarians now have goods which people want and need or are you suggesting that it goes that what they have is irrelevant to what they need?

Knox: The supplying of goods to meet user needs has not been viewed as a businessman would normally look at it.

Stevens: Is it true that you have no real best sellers that can carry the dollar load?

Knox: We cheer at sales of 1,000; McGraw-Hill needs 20,000 to cheer.

Scott: Aren't there things in the system that people don't want?

Knox: About 20 percent. If somebody wants a single copy, you give them a single copy and charge them for it. Those people who need information in the course of doing their business need this service.

Burkhardt: You were originally set up to serve industry in business. Isn't that why you were put in the Department of Commerce?

Knox: Yes. We are increasing our service to state and local governments also. That has been a long-neglected part of our charter. Science, engineering, state and local governments and the general public interested in utilitarian goods are the persons that we are suppose to serve.